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REASON  
REGULATED  
OR,  
Brief Reflections, upon a  
TREATISE of  
HUMAN-REASON.

By T. P.



Printed, Anno Dom. 1675.

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Printed, James D. ...



## Reason Regulated :

OR,

Brief Reflections upon a  
late Treatise of *Human*  
*Reason*.



THE very same Mo-  
tives, which caused  
that Ingenious Au-  
thor to publish his  
HUMAN-REASON  
and his Search into the  
Nature, and Quali-  
ty of his Religion,  
( and those were [ he says ] to Commu-  
nicate it's Effects to others ; ) carried  
me also on, to a resolution of exposing  
these short Observations, to the View  
of some of my Particular Friends ;  
though, I must confess, the Extraordi-  
nary Quaintness, and Rarity ( not to  
say Intricacy ) of his Arguments, were  
enough ( at first sight ) to deter, and  
startle a much stronger *Humanist* ,  
than my self, from opposing so great

a Master of *Reason*: Yet when I consider, that it (according to his own Principles) I follow'd sincerely the Dictamen, or sway, of my own Judgment, (for *Human Reason* is nothing else,) I could not, as to the Period or Effect, (which is to arrive at Truth, and Happiness,) possibly err, or be misguided, nor consequently raise in him, the least Indignation against me; This Consideration (I say) conquer'd all other Obstacles, and Arguments to the contrary, and encourag'd me to prosecute my Design: For (thought I) in this Procedure (if he dares believe himself) my Reason (though directly opposed) must perfectly agree with his: Now if this be Implicatory, and Absurd (which truly in my Judgement, is in a very high Degree); He that broach'd the Opinion must (if he can) either reconcile, or defend it.

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FIRST,

**F**irst he says, *That the Variety of Guides in so long, and dangerous a Journey; (meaning I suppose, our Pilgrimage to Heaven) where he sometimes meets with no Tract, or Path at all, and sometimes with so many, and those so contrary in the Appearance of their First Entry; will confound him more than the want, and in this Intricate Labyrinth, resolves to follow his own private Reason, and Judgment: Which cannot Rationally disprove me in affirming, 'Tis evident to most Mens Humane Reason, (upon a diligent and impartial search) that the Directive part or Guides of Gods Church, are as discernable from all Pretenders to, and Usurpers of that Office, as Light is from Darkness, or Day from Night; and therefore His Plea of Variety (for all his Specious talke) will hardly acquit him from a notorious and dangerous defect, and neglect in his Reason, and Duty, (for a man may doe all that possibly he can, and yet not doe all that's possible to be done) nor consequently can he ensure himself of Future Securi-*

ty, and Happiness, ( let him pretend never so carefully, and constantly to follow the clearest Light of his own Reason ) unless he can Demonstrate ( which is impossible ) an impossibility of distinguishing true *Guides* from false. Neither doe we, in following the Direction of the Church, relinquish, but punctually obey, our Reason : we grant, That must necessarily be Previous, or Introductive, ( *i. e.* It ought to direct us to be directed ); but when it assumes ( and this is the Vulgar, and *Epidemical* Errour ) the whole Conduct in every Particular Occurrence to it self, it ceaseth then to be our *North-Star*; and becomes a meer *Ignis fatuus*, cheating us into dark, and dangerous Pit-falls, and Precipices : To which that saying of Saint *Bernard* is very Pertinent, and Applicable ; He, that will be his own Teacher, will have a Fool to his Scholar.

God not-seldom permits the Devil to transform himself into an Angel of Light, which is an infernal Fallacy, hardly ( if possibly ) distinguishable

shable by any private Reason, or Industry; and therefore the same Merciful God, to prevent our being intangled, and caught in so enticing, and treacherous a Snare, hath been pleas'd out of his Immense care, and love to Man-kind, ( for he ordinarily works by secondary means, ) to promise the Perpetual Illumination of the Holy Ghost to those, whom he left, under Him, to Guide, Govern, and Instruct us concerning all difficulties, we shall encounter in our Way to Heaven: So that if we are deceived in being Govern'd, and Rul'd by that Church, which our Blessed Saviour hath commanded us ( under Penalty of being accounted Heathens, and Publicans ) to obey; He, that can neither deceive, nor be deceived, has done it. Which is both false, and impossible in the highest Degree.

And yet I doe not deny but that God Almighty may so immediately irradiate a Soul with Divine Light, as that it may be saved without an intermediate Guidance of any Church at all, Fallible or Infallible. But, certainly

certainly, we must not conclude what He Will doe, from what he Can : and for a Man to desert the Communion, and Direction of the Church, because God ( if he pleases ) can otherwise save him, would be as desperate a Presumption, as for a Man to leap out of a Good Ship into the Sea, because God strengthn'd Saint Peter once, to walk upon the Water.

God Almighty ( no doubt ) can sustain a Man without any corporal Nourishment at all ; but I should think it a madness, for all that, in any Person to resolve therefore to Eat no more ; or to say, that Meat and Drink are not necessary for the Preservation of his Life. Starving would infallibly convince him of his Error, as Perdition will those that wilfully separate from the Church, out of which there is no Salvation : And 'tis no more Uncharitable, or less true to affirm this, than to say, Those, that were out of Noah's Ark were inevitably, and irrecoverably drown'd in the Deluge : What greater

greater Temerity, and Madness can there be, than for a Man to disobey God's Positive Command in hopes of his Favour, and Assistance some other extraordinary way: And therefore that *Humane Reason*, or ( what if I say'd? ) *Septicism*; which deviates from that Method, and rejects that irrevocable, and indispensable Injunction, *Harken to the Church*, ( be it never so speciously, and floridly propos'd ) can never issue from the Father of Lights, but is Originally Created, or Kindled at the Wild-Fire of a Flashing Fancy, that can have no longer Duration, or Permanence than Lightning; which in an instant vanishes. Submitting our Judgments to Authority, or any thing else whatsoever, ( he says ) gives Universality, and Perpetuity to Error.

This may Jingle pretily to some Ears, that itch after Novelty, and Libertinism; but I shall never believe it Rational, unless he can Demonstrate, that the fittest thing to hold Water is a Cullender; For he might

as well have told me, and as solidly (though in plainer Words); If you would keep, and confine the Sea within it's due Bounds, and Limits, there is no better way in the world, than to dig down the Banks, and demolish the Walls, and then you need fear neither Inundation, nor Deluge. *His vertitur Orbis.*

A Man ( I know ) may see the Sky in a Pail of Fair Water, but I never before heard ( as he argues ) that Heaven was to be seen in the Bottom of a Well; and therefore that ordinary ( or rather extraordinary ) saying of *Democritus*, That Truth lies in the Bottom of a Deep Well. I must confess, I do not well understand: and so for fear of drowning shall let it pass, as too deep and dangerous a Mystery for my shallow Reason to dive, or look into.

Thus some *Criticks* of this Speculative Age, first turn their Brains, and then all things Topsy-turvy; For if this Doctrine of *Democritus* be true, we must no longer say, Look up, but down, to Heaven; and Pump, or draw



draw up Salvation, as they do water in Buckets.

He needed not, To have Enumerated the Various Sentiments of the Ancient Philosophers, and no warre ensuing. Thence to infer a possibility for Christians of different Belief, to live (as to the Exterieur) Harmoniously, and Peaceably; For, doubtless, the Several Sects among us, if all the force they use to reduce others to their way be (as it ought to be) only perswasive, not compulsive, may (as in other dissenting Countries) move in our English Sphere without clashing as the Planets do in their Regularly-Irregular Motions: If this be all he drives at, there's no Difference at all between him and me.

Whether the Reformation (which he endeavours to vindicate) were the occasion of so much Bloud, Confusion, and almost Desolation in all those Countries, which admitted (or rather were forc'd to) it; I shall not here dispute: but 'tis out of Controversie they actually happen'd; which Dismal Effects (I must confess) enforce

force me to believe that God Almighty's Benediction (for all their specious Reasonings, and Religious Preferences) never did, or will, goe with it.

He runs on for several Pages very wittily, and Rethorically, to prove, *That every Mans Particular Reason, if well follow'd (and there's a Parenthesis) will Infallibly carry him at last, though perhaps through many Tedious, and Troublesome Wandrings, to his Eternal Happiness.* Well; I am contented with this, and say so too, but withall must ask him a Question, Why does not that man well follow his Reason, who in all Doubts and Difficulties, (for certainly such things there are) thinks nothing under Heaven more Rational, than to submit to, and acquiesce in the Interpretation, Definitions, and Decrees of General Councils? If he says, These all together, may Erre as likely as he, then I say, this, to my Reason, sounds as unreasonably as if he should say, One Man may be as strong as ten thousand: and thus if his own Argument be

be good ; ( whether the Victory be on his , or on my side ) he is equally defeated. I grant , a Christian ( though without any Fraction , or Division [ for certainly there's no Plurality ] in the Radical Unity , ) may believe Various Articles by the same Act of Faith : for it's Root , or Fountain ( although it germinat's , and spreads into several Branches , or runs in various Rivulets ) is indivisibly one and the same ; ( for doubtless a Man's Faith may encrease without Variation ) : but to say ( as this Author ) *That a Man may be to day fully a Papist , seven years hence a Protestant , and then What-he-fancies-next ; and that although he believes things directly Opposite , evidently Contrary , Pro and Con , or forward and backward : Yet if he be all the while Actuated , and moved by the same Soul of Faith , ( which he says is Conscience ) it is still the same Numerical Faith.* This I say , is such a Preposterous piece of Jumbling Divinity , that although he may please himself with the Fancy ( for that's the very best ) of  
it ;

it ; I shall never believe the God of Order, and Unity, can Fancy, or be Pleased with, such a Deformed shapeless and Confus'd Variety ; He might as well have told me ( and I should as soon have believ'd him ) that a Man, if he be all the while vivify'd, or actuated by the same instruments of Life ( viz. Heart and Vitals ) though he be set just upon his Head, he stands directly upon his Feet. Tricks of Activity are commendable enough, but certainly 'tis desperate for a Mans Faith to leape the Sommerfet : And thus, Unity or Sameness of Beliefe ( so often inculcated in Holy Scripture ) is quite thrown out of doors, and Divine Faith reduc'd to a strong ( or rather a Weak, and Wavering ) Fancy.

Wherefore allowing *His Philosophical Discourse, about Corporal Substances to be true* ( for I grant in Sublunary Bodies there is, yet without any Alteration, or Change in the Form or Species, ( as he pretends may be in Faith ), a perpetual Flux ; and that they must necessarily Transpire

spire to make room for new Nourishment ; ) Yet I deny, for the Reasons aforesaid, That only such a *Fixt Motion*, or *Variable Identity*, ( as he speaks of, ) is requisite to a Man's Faith ; Nor truly can I perceive any better, or more solid Result from all his surprizing Arguments than this, That so Men doe but believe, 'tis no great matter for the *What*, or the *Why*.

He will still have his own *sole* and *singular Reason* to Counterballance ( if not outweigh ) all Ecclesiastical Rule and Superiority, ( as much as to say, The best way to secure a Ship at Sea is, to take away her Anchor, and Rudder, ) For what is it ( says he ) you will trust your Soul with, in this Important Business ? Is it the Authority of Men ? These verily may lead you into Errour, and 'tis not impossible into the worst and greatest of all, which is the Desertion of Christ himself. Such a Possibility, I utterly deny, and, for my Confidence and Warrant, produce the sacred Writ, where the Church is call'd, *The Ground, and Pillar of Truth* :

with the Divine Promise annext, *Against which the Gates of Hell, shall never prevail*: Now if this Gentleman can shew such a Character given, or Promise made to his solitary Reason: I'll submit and beg his Pardon; if he cannot, then he must excuse me for doubting, his Reason did not take such Directions as it ought, and might have done before it set forth? nor consequently can he ascertain me, that 'tis purify'd from all Passion, Interest, and Sensuality. Pride made the Greatest Angel a Devil, and a Man's own Reason (too far trusted) turns to Madness.

*The Arian Heresie* ( which he hints at ) Clouded, but never Totally Eclipsed, or Corrupted the Church, which will ever remain immaculate, and pure: For the *Westerne* Parts felt little, or nothing of that Spiritual Pestilence, which in less than four Years she happily Dispersed, and dissipated, as the Sun by Degrees, does Mist's, and Vapours.

*As to the Condemnation of Athanasius, and whatsoever sinister, or An-*

ti-Christian Proceedings, he chargeth the then - Pope with; If he would vouchsafe to peruse some of our Antient, or Modern Controvertists ( who treat at large of the Sanctions of General Councils ) ; I presume, he would clearly, and evidently discover his Mis-information; and that, which he is willing to take for a certain Truth, ( for *Quod volumus, facile credimus,* ) would prove a meer Calumny, and Imposture.

But still, from the wicked Errours of some of that Council, he infers a possibility, that all might unanimously have err'd to : For, says he, *This possibility of Error ( even in so high a Degree, ) we shall find in the Nature, and very Elements of a Council. For if any one Member of it may be a Heathen, or Atheist in Opinion ( as the Lives ( he says ) of many Popes, and the Speeches of some declare, that they themselves have been, ) why not Two, not Three, not more, not the Major Part, that is, The whole Council ?*

Though this ( I Confess ) be out of

my Element, yet I think the inconsequence of it, may be Demonstrated by this Syllogism. That which may happen to any one egge in the Parish may happen to all. But it may happen to any one egge in the Parish to goe into a Man's Mouth at once; therefore it may happen to all the Egges in the Parish, to go into a man's mouth at once: Now, Who sees not the *Aquivocation* of his *Logick*, which Distinguishes not between a Divisive, and Collective sense.

*Who those Persons were (which he mentions with so much Veneration) of such Excellent Abilities, and worthy Spirits, to examine by the Rules of their own Reason, those Follies, and dangerous Errours in Religion, I know not, but am certain those that Converted the Idolatrous Nations of the World to Christianity, were of that very sort of Men, who, he is pleas'd to say, are first taught to think, and then to speak they know not what, I mean the Sons of the Church of Rome, so that he who charges these with Superstition and Idolatry, because they*

beg



beg the intercession of the Saints, and use pious Representations; his Reason indeed teaches him first to think, and then to say, he knows not what: For would it not be wonderful Wisdom in any man to tell another, that if he has a mind to preserve the memory of a very dear Friend, he must by no means look upon his Picture, ( for that would infallibly take his thoughts quite off from him, ) but if he stares upon the bare Wall, he will there certainly find a very lively and perfect Idea of him. *Qui vult decipi, decipiatur.* Undoubtedly the Picture of our Blessed Saviour upon the Cross, is so far from making us think of any Strange, or False Gods, that it gathers our vain, and scatter'd thoughts together, and makes us more Vigorously, and Attentively think of Him, to whom we address our Prayers.

What hurt or danger can there be in any thing, which occasions one to think of our Saviour *Christ*, ( as a Picture of his Passion very Effectually doth )? or what Idolatry, when

( excited thereby to a Contemplation of our Saviours Crucifixion, ) one Bowes towards ( not to ) the Picture ? Do Men worship, or adore, any Minister pronouncing the word *JESUS*, because they doe ( or should ) Bow at that sacred Name ? Certainly no ; me-thinks the very Light of Nature should decide this Controversie without more adoe. No Man bowes at those Five Letters, *I. E. S. U. S.* but because Conjoyn'd, they spell the Holy Name of *JESUS*. So, no Man Bowes at the Substance, or Colours of a Picture of the Passion, but because being dispos'd, and shadow'd by the *Painter's Pencil*, they represent our Redeemer dying upon the Cross : A Picture then is a Word to the Eye, as a word is a Picture to the Ear ; and if it be not Idolatry to bow at the Name, ( which is but a sound, ) I shall never be convinc'd, that 'tis any to bow at the Picture of *JESUS*, which is but a Shaddow, unless it could be prov'd, that all things are strictly forbidden, which are not expressly commanded. But to our Author.

*Men*

*Men ought ( he says ) to put their Confidence rather in the Traditions of the former, than the Commands of the present Church : This indeed wants nothing at all but proving ; but, supposing it true, what better means can he possibly propose to himself to know the Truth of former Traditions, than the Suffrage of this present Church ? But he would have no man build his Belief upon the Authority of past, or present Ages ; ( a strange Caution from a single person. ) For, says he, If they look upon all the Consequences of that Opinion, ( it seems then all our Fore-fathers were stupidly blind ) they are in much greater danger of being drawn from the Christian Faith, than those, who remit the Judgment of these things to their own Reason : For God's sake, why so ? That certainly now is the true Rule of Faith, which was the Essential means of planting, and conserving it first ; but Orall, and Apostolical Tradition, not written Books, nor any Man's private Spirit, or Reason, was the Essential means of Planting, and Conserving it at first ; therefore Orall, and Aposto-*

lical Tradition, nor Written Books, &c. is still the true, and certain Rule of Faith: And Consequently this Author's *Human Reason*, much more likely to draw him from the Christian Faith than such a Rule.

I am glad his Reason hath at last compell'd him to Believe, that, Infalibility (let him define it how he will) must necessarily be annex to our Guide in Spiritual Matters.

And I should with all my Soul, rejoyce to hear of any means, That might restore the Greatest Part of *Man-kind* (as he says) into a hopeful, and comfortable Condition, and that so many Millions might not Eternally perish: But that Dreadful Sentence, *Extra Ecclesiam nulla est Salus*, turns my hope into fear, and trembling; for though ignorance perhaps may very much Extenuate, or excuse; yet if an Error be Fundamental, that ignorance (though never so invincible,) cannot after it's Nature, or quality; nor acquit the Professor from all Guilt, and Penalty; for he, that unawares drops into

into the Water, (if he be Overwhelm'd,) is as certainly drown'd, as he that willfully plunges himself in, over Head and Eares. And I fear, the reward of invincible Ignorance, may be rather an Abatement of Punishment, than a Fruition of Bliss.

Errours in Faith, (at least Fundamental,) I conceive to be of a more pernicious Consequence, than (at present) a vitious Life; for no Rational Man (I think) questions but that 'tis better for a Man to Loyter, or Stumble, nay to fall and hurt himself in a right Path; than to walk Uprightly (I mean with Moral Honesty) in a wrong. As there is more hopes certainly of the Salvation of a sinful Christian, than a Religious Jew; the former being still in the Road possibly to recover, and persevere Penitently, and Prosperously; the latter being totally incapacitated through the Eccentrical Crookedness of his way to make a good, or happy Period of his ill-begun Progress.

There may be several wayes to the same

same Faith, but certainly *Not several Faiths* ( as this Author imagines ) to the same GOD, who is an Indivisible, and Immutable Essence ; & therefore, Going - vigorously - forward , signifies nothing, unless we goe right : He that wills the End, must necessarily use the means. So that this Author can never win me to his Opinion, that all Men ( though never so Discrepant in their Faith, following in all Particulars the Dictates of their own private Reason, ) will infallibly in the end arrive at Security, and Happiness ; till he hath proved, that the Way, which leads a Man directly to *Berwick*, ( if he that travels in it confidently believes he's right, ) will certainly bring him to *Dover*. *Crede quod habes, et habes.*

He had rather think ( he says ) with Origen, that the Devils themselves by the excessive kindness of their Judge, shall at last be exempted from Damnation, than that he himself, shall be damn'd for that Opinion.

Undoubtedly, this shews the Author

thor to be a very Compassionate, and good Natur'd Man ; but certainly that cannot be true Charity, which 'thwarts the irrevocable Decree of Heaven ; and truly I do not see, why he may not ( with as much Reason ) doubt that the Glorify'd Bodyes may fall from their Beatitude , as think, that the Divels themselves shall at last be releas'd from their Damnation : but as, certainly, the former are past all hopes of Relaxation from their Torments, so the latter are past all fear of being depriv'd of their Felicity and Eternal Jubilee. For that which truly makes Heaven and Hell, is not so much the excessive Greatness, as Infinity of their Joyes, and Torments.

He thinkes, *He may very well believe, that there are Secret and Wonderful ways, by which GOD may be pleased to apply his Merits to Mankind besides, those direct, open, and ordinary ones of Baptism, and Confession.* This I must confess is very secret, wonderful, and dark Divinity, because Diametrically opposite to the  
Divine

Divine Writ, where *JESUS* answering *Nicodemus* his Question, said positively, *Amen, Amen, I say to thee, Unless a Man be born again of Water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of GOD.*

And therefore why this Author should advance a Belief so palpably *Anti-Christian*; I cannot imagine, unless he supposes (which is Blasphemy to think) that our Blessed Saviour did not then fully understand his own mind. The Text clearly confutes the Extravagancy, and impiety of such an imagination, and discovers this Authors *Human Reason* to be in this, (as in many other particulars,) but a fallacious Dream, from which if he would rouse, and thoroughly awake himself, he would quickly perceive it to vanish into nothing, and prove a meer Illusion; For I leave any Prudent Christian to judge, whether he thinks it not onely absolutely necessary to walk towards Heaven, by those Direct, Open, and Ordinary wayes of Baptism, &c. but also absolutely impossible, (unless in  
case



case of Martyrdom, which is still Baptism in Blood), to cross over upon such a slight, and slippery Bridge as this, because the Author think's (without proving) that there may be other secret, and wonderful ways of getting thither: And he may (if he please) goe one Step farther, and believe, that there may be no other secret, and wonderful ways for a man to live, besides Breathing: *Corruptio optimi pessima*. And certainly that must need's be an impious excess of Charity, which not onely shakes the Foundation, but frustrates the whole Fabrick, and Designs of Christianity. G O D deliver all good Christians from such gentle, and good-Natur'd Doctrine.

Our Blessed Saviour (that best knew) foretold, there must be *Heresies*, which most Divines agree to be those Gates of Hell mentioned in Scripture, and consequently in-lets to Damnation: Contrary to which this Author contends, that scarce any *Heresie* (if at all discoverable) can be Damnable, and maintains such a  
facility

Facility to avoid all dangerous Errors, that no Men of ordinary Sense, and Reason can possibly fall into them.

*Hæreticum hominem post unam, & secundam correptionem* ( the Scripture saith ) *devita.* But how can he be shun'd, that is not knowable ? And therefore, I must intreat this Author to correct Saint Paul's Admonition, or his own *Human Reason* ( which, he thinks fit, ) for one of them certainly is very much in fault.

To obey in matters of Belief without being able to believe the thing commanded, is no less ( he says ), and seems more a Contradiction, than simply to obey without knowledge of a Command. Certainly this Author thinks every Man's Reason has a secret, Magnetick Power to attract, or draw down the high Mysteries of Faith within view of his Understanding, which is impossible : But if Men's Reasons are ( as beyond Debate they may be ) satisfy'd, that those who guide them, neither will, nor can deceive; what should make them start, or fly back ?  
Their

Their incapacity to understand can be no good, or sufficient Reason for them to disbelieve, and a much worse Argument to prove any thing (*de fide*) false, which they propose, who doe truly, and Naturally convey to us, the Will, and Pleasure of God; they are his Voice, (*Qui vos audit me audit,*) or at least the very *Eccho* of it. The Church never Doctrinally (but when, and what CHRIST) speaks, and if he, that hears one, hears both (which our Saviour himself saith) *Human Reason* (which thus far ought to proceed, and we to follow) tells us, Our business, and duty then is to obey, and not dispute. Besides, if that saying be true, *Fides est Argumentum non-apparentium*, I do not see why Faith, and Obedience, should stand still, because Reason cannot go forward.

He says, *The Unity of the Christian Church is broken, not so much by them who differ in Opinions, as by them, who will not allow of such a Difference.*

*Cuius contrarium verum est:* By  
this

this I see, Reason has her *Antipodes* too; for, Can any thing be more directly against it, than to call him the greatest Wrangler, who would prevent others from quarrelling? And to say, he that would reconcile Differences, and hinder Men from going together by the Eares, was the occasion of their falling out? Certainly 'tis as Rational to say, There can be no Order, where there's no Confusion, as to say, There can be no Unity, without Difference: 'Tis a Solecisme, and Paradox much above the reach of my Reason; but if he understands it, 'tis well enough.

Who knows (saith he) whether that GOD, who liked best that no Men's Bodies should have the same complexion, no Men's Faces the same Figures, no Hands the same Lines, no Voyces the same Sounds; nay, not so much but their Motions, and Gestures should be Distinguishable; has not likewise best pleased himself with no less Variety in the parts of Men, that are Immaterial, and even in the most Immaterial Actions of those parts, which

*which is the Worship, and Adoration of a Deity.*

This ( though it look prettily upon Paper ) is a meer *Quick - Sand*, and easily answer'd with asking another Question, Who knows whether GOD is best pleas'd with such Variety in the Faith, as in the Faces of Men? That which fortifies me, indubitably to believe the contrary, are those express Words of Scripture, One GOD, one Faith, one Baptism, which evidently inferre, that besides that General Impediment ( *viz.* the Sinfulness, and Frailty of our Natures, ( men, if sway'd solely by their own reason ) easily may, and too frequently do, miscarry, for want of a Right Path.

*Does GOD ( says he ) gain any thing by our Devotions? does he receive Hurt from one kind of Worship, and Advantage by another?*

No surely, ( say I ) for he is an Unutterable Plenitude of Bliss, and Delectation to Himself; but 'tis as certainly true, that he may be pleas'd with one kind of Worship, and abo-

minate an other ; unless *Jeroboam* ( who, the Holy Scripture more than once saith, made *Israel* to sin ) committed no Crime, nor consequently offended *God*, in setting up the *Calves* in *Dan* and *Bethel*.

*Without doubt* (saith he, but that's no proof) *He who gave Rules, which might accept of several Interpretations, when he might have made them as plain to all in one Sense, as they seem now to every man in his own, is likewise well contented, that they shall be Interpreted severally.*

Truly, if our Blessed Saviour had not Constituted Select Judges, and Expositors of his Divine Laws ( which no Laws ever were without ) I might perhaps be of his mind too ; but since ( *God be thanked* ) 'tis evidently otherwise ; without doubt this Author is egregiously mistaken. Certainly *God Almighty* ( if he had intended Reason to be absolute Lord Paramount, independently to Rule, and Instru& in every particular Emergency, & Ambiguity ), must have given all Men the same measure to compass the same

same end. For, as a Ship, though it lies in the Water, if it has not enough to make it Float, can no more move forward, than if it lay upon dry Land: So it can never sink into my Understanding, How he, that has less Reason, should as safely, and effectually proceed, as he that has more, unless this Author could prove a part of any thing to be as much as the whole, or demonstrate Reason to be of the Miraculous Nature of the *Manna*, among the *Israelites*, whereof he who gather'd much had nothing over, and he who gather'd little, had no lack.

Were this seriously consider'd, I am confident upon second Thoughts, (and they are best), this Author would be convinc'd, that a Man's Reason alone can never doe the Work, I mean steer him securely (over that deep Ocean of Scripture), to the Port of Eternal Happiness, without Embarking in that *Ecclesiastical Ship*, the Church; in which (if they Conform to her Doctrine), the Poor are as safe as the Richest, and the Weak-

est [as the Wife : and in this Reliance we doe no more desert our own Reason, than a Man does his Corporal Strength, in taking a Staffe to help, and support him in a dangerous, and slippery Passage : And whatever Arguments are advanc'd to enervate the solidity of this Ground, ( let them never so briskly sally out , ) they can be no better , than meer empty Ebullitions or Bubblings of Reason.

*As well ( says he ) the Mud by growing hard, as the Wax by Melting, obeys the Sun ; nor is it less glorify'd by the one , than by the other.*

It is true the same Sun ( and I grant 'tis equally ( though variously ) obey'd by both, ) softens Wax, and hardens Mud ; ( their Natures being by Heat to melt, and grow hard, ) but I cannot conceive how the Parity holds exactly between those Inanimate, material Substances, and our Immortal, and Immaterial Souls : For certainly the Divine Infuser of Faith, created them with Identical Capa-



Capabilities, and fitted them Uniformly for the Reception of their Proper Objects, *viZ.* the Mysteries of Christianity, which whosoever Obstinately Dis-believes, or rejects, is deservedly Excommunicated, (because he wilfully exclude himself) from that Mystical Ark the Church of GOD.

But, by the way (me thinks) this Author talks very incongruously of more than one Religion, the very word bearing witness against him; for the Substantive *Religio*, I take to be deriv'd from the Verb *Religo* to Tye or Bind together; but his *Latitudinarian*, or *Socinian* Doctrine, does not onely Untie and Unbind, but Blends, and Shuffles all into a Chaos: Yet Faith with him must still be Properly one, and the same; though according to the diverse Reception (says he) it produces not only diverse, but contrary Effects.

This I shall believe, when he hath convinc'd, that, because all things, which are porable are comprehended under the Denomination of Liquour; there-

fore, White-Wines, Rhenish, Canary, Claret, Syder, and Muscadine; are Certainly, that Man would be censur'd to have drunk too much of these, that could be brought to swallow so great a Contradiction: Yet this the Author must say, (if he speaks consequently to his own Arguments,) is as defensible as his Hyperbole, that the Diversity of Religious Opinions (because injuriously produc'd by him under the Venerable Name of Faith,) are not several, but one and the very self same belief: which certainly is as far from right Reasoning, as a Confusion of Fancies is from purely Divine Faith.

I should have found no fault with *His comparing the Unity of God's Church to Wed-lock;* but that he spoyles the Similitude in allowing every Particular Member to believe contrary to one another, nay to themselves: by which he pulls down again what he built up; and makes that Conjunction - Disjunctive, by a new-found-Negative, or Counter-Creed.

No body at all questions, but that a Foot when it hath the Gout, (as he sayes,) or a Hand when it shakes with the Palsie, remain still Parts of the Body: but if they are Irrecoverably useless, they are no otherwise so, than as a Dead Bough is a Member of a Living Tree; there may be Continuity, but no Communication between them; and this Debility, or decay, must needs happen through some secret Perversity, or Obliquity in the Recipient, not any Defect or Deficiency in the Radical Aliment. The same I say of those that wilfully persist in Incredulity, and Errour; but yet withall must add this, that they are never Irrevocably (God's Grace being ever busie,) Anathematiz'd by this Church; which is much more willing, and ready upon Submission, and Recantation to Re-embrace, than for Obstinacy to Excommunicate any.

There may certainly be (though he thinks otherwise,) a full, and intire agreement in all Points of Faith, of one Member with an other, either Actually or Votively, (which to

GOD is *Equivalent*, ) or else the *Athanasian Creed* (admitted by most Protestants, ) is not to be Credited, which, without *Hesitation*; begins thus;

Whosoever will be saved, it is needful before all things that he hold the Catholick Faith; The which unless each one shall keep whole and Inviolatē, (mark that, ) he shall without doubt eternally perish; now, if this be (as certainly it is) true, he that wilfully disbelieves any one Article, forfeits his whole Faith, and Consequently the least Defect therein is a total Privation.

Now as for Controversie (at which he briefly touches,) like the Bloud (I know) it incessantly Circulates; but Alas! To no better purpose, that I can perceive, than to foment the Quarrel, and keep it still alive: For through the Immoderation, and Unnatural heat of some *Polemick* Writers, 'tis so far from effecting a Reconciliation or Union, (which ought to be the Principal Design and end of it,) that it do's nothing else but

but breed an Implacable, if not incurable Itch; the scratching whereof may, perhaps, afford some present Tittillation or Delight; but 'tis usually perform'd with so much violence, and rage, that it does not only not allay, but more inflame, and ferment the Humour; to cure which, there is no Medicine more Effectual, or Balsome more Sovereign, than our Mutual, and Cordiall Prayers, for one another. But, to pursue our Author.

*As for those Men (says he) who accuse us of Pride, and Vanity, for Attributing so much to our own Reason, making Presumption. and Self-Flattery, the Fountain of this Opinion, it is a Scandal so false, and so Ridiculous, that without much Humility I should disdain to answer it. And truly, in my Opinion, I have not heard a louder sound of Pride, than in that very Expression. But, letting this pass, (with his Subsequent, soft Arguments, for the Civility, and Gentleness of his Religion, which permits every man to have his full Swing,*

or Career ) I am come to Master *Hob's*, for whom, though it is not my business, nor design to be Advocate, nor in the least to diminish this Author's merit; ( who, in some parts of his Discourse against him, and elsewhere, shewes great Fertility of Wit, and Pregnancy of *Rhetorick* ): Yet I cannot but think Master *Hob's* Arguments much more Conducting to Order, and Uniformity, than his Unreasonably - Rational, or Chimerical Method; which slighting all *Ecclesiastical* Tribunals, authoriseth every Particular Person, in Spirituals to be his own Judge, and Pastor; and makes the Governours of the Church of CHRIST stand for meer Cyphers, which is directly against the Institution, Doctrine, and Designe of CHRIST himself: But, that *Humane Reason*, which exalts itself above this Divine Jurisdiction, ( be it never so full of Flourishes, and Astonishment ) is but a glorious Nothing.

- He is very apt to mistake, *Concerning the Roman-Church*: For although

though indeed her Publick *Liturgie* (the *Mass*) be Universally said in the *Latine* Tongue, yet all Preaching, and Catechizing, is performed in the Language of each respective Country, and all her Members without any restraint, say their Prayers in their own Native Language.

I am not at all satisfy'd, With his endeavouring to Distinguish between Right Reason, and that which is falsely esteem'd so; For, if in all matters of Faith, and Difficulty, every Man's Reason must be his Rule, and every man's Rule must be his Reason, without adhering or submitting to any other Superior Regulation or Judge, or Captivating his Understanding (as Scripture requires) in *Obsequium Fidei*: If this Rule ( I say ) can be thought Regular and safe, then I think this Author needs not to despair of bringing men by Degrees to believe, That nothing can be in so Rational or Credible, which is not evidently so to whom 'tis propos'd; especially since he has already affirm'd ( which is pretty well towards it )  
that

that nothing can be dangerously Er-  
 roneous, that a man firmly believes.  
 But can any thing be more Illogical  
 and distant from Reason? Unless it  
 be this which (*per Consequens*) fol-  
 lows; Every *Orthodox* Divine is a  
 Rational Man; *Ergo*, every Rational  
 Man is an *Orthodox* Divine, and ought  
 not to be taught, but to teach himself.  
 Contrary to which. *Matth.* 28. 19,  
 20. our Blessed Saviour commanded  
 his Disciples to goe Preach, Teach,  
 and Baptize all Nations. But I never  
 read that they sent the Scriptures a-  
 lone to the Unconverted, that they  
 might, by the Rules of their own Rea-  
 son examine, and frame out the True  
 Religion; but, withall, went them-  
 selves, or sent *Expositors*: With-  
 out which, I never heard of *Turk*, or  
*Jew* that ever chang'd his *Alcoran*,  
 or *Talmud* for the Christian *Bible*;  
 which evidently demonstrates against  
 this Author, That Reason alone can  
 be no Competent means, or security ei-  
 ther of becoming, or remaining a good  
*Christian*. All Men therefore are,  
 or should be, instructed: We are  
 Taught



Taught, and they were Taught the same, who Teach us; and their Masters had Teachers, and those Teachers Masters, till we come Gradually to the Supream, the Original Guides of the Present Church, which also receives the Traditions of the former; and so orderly downward till we come to the Apostles; and at last to (our *Ne plus ultra*,) our Saviour CHRIST himself: So that 'tis no Contradiction but a certain Truth, that there is no going to CHRIST, but from CHRIST. *à JESU ad CHRISTUM*: That *Humane Reason*, then, which unlinckes it self from this Divine, and Infallible Concatenation, flies giddily about, and can no more naturally settle, or fix, than a Feather in the Wind; and that a man, who stubbornly steps aside from this Universal, this General Track, will not onely lose his Way, but his Reason, and Himself too. But, now, to another Matter.

Henry the Eighth, did certainly more than seem (as this Author says)

so leave the Pope, because he would not consent to his Libidinous Desires; and assum'd therefore the Supremacy, that he might give himself leave to Marry, or Repudiate what Wives he fancy'd, or dislik'd. But although Abbeyes, Monasteries, and Religions - Houses were thereupon demolished, and the Profits, and Revenues converted to Secular Uses. I cannot think, he got any great Advantage by the Bargain, (either to Body, or Soul,) who dy'd with a *Perdidimus Omnia* in his Mouth; and found by Wofull Experience, That in the end, ther's nothing got by Reforming. But to leave this Digression.

The Author desires those, who would have his Understanding captivated, to convince him, First, by theirs, that it ought to be so, and not to think to enslave his Reason, till they first overcome it; which when they have done, then they will lose what they contend for; For by our Reason's being Guided, Conquered, and Enslaved, Their's are become Guides, Conquerours,

querours, and Masters; so that it will appear at last impossible for Human Reason to lose anything in one place, without gaining as much in some other.

Thus he. To which I answer in the first place, If Scripture be Reason, our Understandings ought to be captivated to the Obedience of Faith: In the next, I would not have him think us so unreasonable, as to deprive men Totally of the Use of their Reason: by no means, but to check, and keep it within it's proper Sphere, and in this we abridge him of no Liberty, which we allow our selves.

But *Humane Reason* must have a large Mixture of Divinity in it, to be so Adorable as this Author seems to make it. I grant 'tis very precious, and prizable in being given (though not Magisterially to rule) to guide us to those, that can Infallibly do it: And thus (I confess) we are Rul'd by Reason, though not in all things by our own; for all the Difficulties, and Obscurities of Scripture without the

the Church's Light, are no more Interpretable, or Discoverable by Private Reason, than our Eyes can see Objects without Day-Light, or a Candle; and yet neither our Reason, nor our Eyes are given us in vain: But he that, in Spiritual Affairs, which so neerly concern his Soul, Assigns no Visible, no External, rule or Standard to measure Reason by, nor any General Touch-Stone to try True, from False, Adulterated from Currant Coyne; That Man, I say (for all his pretended Light within,) fishes in the Dark with them, that labour'd all Night and caught nothing; or builds his Superstructure before he lays the Foundation. For 'tis as Irrational as if a Man should say, I can guesse so exactly of the *Longitude*, *Latitude*, *Altitude*, and *Profunditie* of any thing by my Eye, that no Demonstration by any *Mathematical* Instruments can (or ever shall) Controul, or Convince me: And truly what better has this Author said from the beginning to the Ending of his Treatise than this, That Mens Reason

sons, and Judgements (as to the Regulation of their Faith) are so very Clear, and Demonstrative, that there is no certain way, no possibility to know whether they be true, or false, right, or wrong: Turne it which way you will, this is all you shall find in it; which Unreasonable Reasoning verifys the Old Proverb, *[ All is not Gold that Glisters: ]* And in Truth, if each Man's Reason (Promisculously) must be Umpire in this Rational Strife; men may Play at this Sport to Perpetuity and never win nor lose: But certainly our Blessed Saviour has not left the Condition of Mankind in this endless Confusion, but has miraculously Founded, and Signaliz'd a Church to end all Controversies, if Men (that talk so much of Reason,) would but rightly use it; for that Reason, which (as to Spirituality) does not take the Church for it's Rest, can never aim, or hit right, but must necessarily fly at Random, and spend it else without Advantage.

*If that Authority (says he) which*  
E
we

we Obey, prescribe Truth, we have Good Fortune in our Obedience, and meerly Good Fortune; but, if it draw us into Errours, we have nothing to say for our Excuse, because we have nothing to Alledge for our Obedience to that Authority.

It seems then, that our Saviour's Commands are of no Validity, and, Harken to, and Obey the Church meer Fopperies; but certain it is CHRIST our Lord has most expressly, and Emphatically enjoyn'd this; and therefore we may (nay must) without any If's, absolutely obey it; and this questionless will be a very good, and sufficient *Plea* for our Obedience at the Day of Judgement, How those, who slight it, would excuse themselves, (were there to be any Pleading at that Grand-Assize;) cannot imagine, but am certain, if they come off well, they will have Extraordinary good Fortune indeed.

His following Discourse, *Of Mens Blind-folding themselves* (as he blindly calls it,) in obeying Ecclesiasticall Super-

Superior, John that I hope, who shall  
 bring themselves to the Guidance of their  
 own Understanding, are in a safe way to the  
 these Adam, I am the Right, but  
 who can credit this, That knows one  
 Hand from the other? ) As Recure of  
 Happiness in their Errors ( very  
 strange ) as others, who are other-  
 wise gull'd even in the Truth, which  
 they happen to fall into, is to extra-  
 vagantly Frivolous, and profane,  
 that it carries off its own Con-  
 futation with it, & sic Transit. To  
 God: ( says he ) Commands no more,  
 but to search, and yet shall find  
 whether the Truth or not, ( Ipse Dix-  
 it ) the Reward of Searching. And  
 truly I have endeavour'd, and narrow-  
 ly search'd to find Reason in this. But  
 after all my Diligence, can perceive no  
 Reward of my Searching; which makes  
 me conclude, That 'tis much more  
 Rational to believe, that GOD gives  
 Man not only a Will to search, but  
 Power to find, and Understanding to  
 know the Truth when found; or else his  
 Commands were vain. But what a  
 Despe-

Desperate, long Leap doe's this Author leave between Searching, and Heaven! If it were as he imagines, I doe not see why a man's Heartily wishing himself there, might not bring him, or waite him thither, without more ado, and Eternal Happinesse be given him as a reward of wishing. But undoubtedly finding the Truth is the reward of Searching, and Heaven the reward of finding the Truth; which those, who search where it is not, shall find nothing but anxiety, and in the end, that they wretchedly cheated themselves, and others with shippery *Sophism's*, and *Chimera's* &c.

As no men are sav'd but through Mercy, so none unjustly Perish; for, Truth is missed, not so much through Difficulty of Finding, as Tepidity, and Negligence in searching it.

*I cannot possibly (says the Author) conceive it agreeable to the Goodness of the Divine Nature so to have hidden, and involved, and almost disguised the Truth from us, if he had intended to*  
have



have censured the missing of it, with so heavy a Sentence, as that of Eternal Ruine; especially, seeing there is but one true Way, (I thought, All ways had been alike with him, as to the end) for one Hundred false ones, and no certain Mark set upon the Entry of that One, to Distinguish it from the Others.

To which I answer; If God Almighty, had left us a Way without any Means or Marks, (as he strangely imagines) to find it out, it would be great Cruelty indeed in him, (which is far enough from his Nature,) to punish Men Eternally, for what is not in their Power possibly to avoid. But since 'tis most evident, that he hath left both sufficient means to find, and Marks to know it by; his Discourse upon this Point, is (in my Opinion) only just so many Words to no purpose. And since those Marks, which are set upon the Entry of this Way, are most clear, and conspicuous to all Men, that look not Obliquely upon them; if (after they are entered) they meet with any thing, that Reason may

perhaps at first, Flinch, or Boggle at the Consideration of it's Inerrability takes away all doubt, and bids them confidently persevere.

*As, in Visible Objects, (says he) we Receive confidently, and rest in the Report of the Sight, &c. So ought we as entirely, and absolutely, to resign our Belief, to the Dictates of our own Understanding, in things intelligible, which are as Properly, and Naturally the Objects thereof, as things visible are of the Eye-Sight; and we might as well say, We will trust our Eyes in Green, White, and Black, but not in Red, or Yellow Colours; as affirm, That our Reason must Guide us in the Contemplation of Nature, the Search of Arts, the Government of Publick Societies, and the Regulation of Mens Lives, as far as the Bounds of Morality; but that it is not at all to be Followed, or Obey'd in Matters that concern Religion.*

Here I must confess, the Author has some Colour, but I think not much Reason, for what he says: For

if he thinks the Objects of Faith, are as Naturally Intelligible by our Understanding, as the Colours of the Rainbow, are visible to our Eyes; he makes no Distinction, or Difference at all, between the Faculties, Operations; or Effects of Nature, and those of Grace, which certainly is a Grand Mistake. For although our own Reason or understanding tell us, There is a God, and He to be Worshipp'd, and Obey'd by us; yet they cannot by their own Light, or inward Forces inform us, In what manner, that must be done by External Agents, by something which is without us. And what imaginably more probable, than the Church of Christ, which can shew a Lineal Succession, from the same Christ, and His Apostles; a Perpetual Visibility, Unity; Universality, Conversion of Nations, Fulfilling of Prophecies, (which baffles all Cavils, and strikes all Objections dumb,) a Miraculous Propagation. Now he who prefers the Dictates of his own Private and naked Reason, and Understanding, in matters that concern

Religion, before the Guidance of a Church thus Adorn'd, thus Mark'd, thus Signaliz'd, deserves not (nor truly has he) either the one, or the other.

Nothing certainly can be more contrary to Humane Reason, *than to think we ought to believe nothing above it*: For there are Truth's Un-intelligible, by the most Exalted, and Sublimated Souls in Heaven, *viz* The Total, and Perfect Quality of the Divine Essence; which, nothing Created, nothing Inferiour to God himself, can Comprehend. The Saints and Angels, enjoy Eternity without knowing what it is; the most Towing Wisdom, and Depurated Reason, can no more reach, or fathom, that Inscrutable Infinity, than Ten Millions of Oceans can be crowded into the smallest Cockle-Shell: For it drowns, or rather (as a Bottomless *Abyſſe*), swallows up all Philosophy and Learning. 'Tis the Philosophers - Stone in Divinity, too hard to be Penetrated, by the Knowledge of Men or Angels: In fine, We know that such a thing there is, but  
never

never shall, it's full, and perfect Definition, it being no less, than the Eternal Tri-une God; whose Deep, brief Character of Himself was, *Sum qui Sum*. Whence I infer, That Men are not endued with Understanding, Presumptuously to stretch beyond it's Strength, and Power, or to use it, as they themselves list; But according to the Will and Pleasure of the *Divine Donor*; who certainly gives Man Reason, not absolutely, but Conditionally; that in Matters of Faith (at least) it should retribute, and pay Homage to Him, I mean, be Regulated by His *Beloved Spouse*, the Church. For as that is no true Liberty, which has no Limit, so that is no true Reason which has no Restriction. Besides, if most Men are allowed, and granted to have Reason, certainly the Church do's not want it, (*Vix unius fortior*); but has in it a more Ample, Perfect, and incorrigible manner, because more immediately, and perpetually accompanied and Assisted by the Holy Ghost. And this is true, nay infallibly true, if Scripture be not false.

How

How those Headless - Members, the *Acephalists*, would answer here, I cannot tell; but am certain, that, As that is not true Reason, but Delusion, which flowes not from the right Fountain; So, a Visible Congregation, or Body of Men, without a Visible Head, or with more than one, is equally Monstrous. But those Spiritual Privateers, who slight the *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, or *Convoy*, condemn the Doctrine of the Church; and resolve to believe no more, than their Understandings can Chew, and their Reason Digest, (there being many things in Nature, which pose Mortality; as the Flux, and Re-flux of the Sea, the Effects of the Load-Stone, &c.) will live *Infidels*, and dye *Atheists*. Nor is this said, To remove the Cognizance of Divine Truths, out of the Court of Reason; but to quell its Pride and Arrogance, and bring it to Submit, and stoop by a Humble Faith, to those Divine Truths; (for certainly a mans Reason, may Rebel against his Faith, as well as his Passion, against Reason) and this Limitation or Coaction, does  
not

not at all deprive man of his Power, nor abridge him of the Liberty, and natural privilege of Election, or Choice.

Religion, says he, appears (and what Christian dares deny it?) to be the Principal End of man's Creation; and therefore as if Horses are made for Burthen, they have a Natural ability given, where-with to do it; If Birds do fly, they have Wings given them for that purpose; (because where an end is Natural, the means are so too: ) So if Religion be the End of Man, as he is Partaker of a Rational Soul, that Reasonable Soul hath some Power naturally placed in it, for the exercise, judgment and choice of Religion.

Or All this is Undenably true. But yet the Author may please to consider That the Horse may be over-loaded and the Bird fly too high; and so certainly Reason may soar above it's Natural Pitch, Meridian Altitude, and Consequently into a Region, where 'tis a mere Stranger, and cannot subsist without some stronger Principle, than it's own proper Strength to support it:

it : And so, granting the Antecedent, I deny the Consequence ; That because G O D gives man Reason ( as I have said ) to light or introduce him into the right Entrance of Religion ; therefore ( being once initiated ) he needs not to ask any more questions , or be guided by others : but let him follow his own Reason, ( I might as well have said his Nose. ) , and he cannot possibly go astray. Briefly ; In the Search, or Choice of our Way, Reason ( I grant ) must rule, but that once found, Obey : For that private Spirit, which is not first quickned, or animated, and then constantly Actuated, by that of God's Church, ( which was Authoriz'd, and Sanctify'd by the Divine Breath of J E S U S ) is a False Conception, no true, or lawful Issue of the Understanding, but a *Spurious*, or *Abortive Embrian* of the Brain ; a False Light, a Deceitful Phantasm.

But the Author says, *If this Doctrine ( that is for every Man to believe ad libitum, ) were Generally planted in the Minds of men, both the Reality, and* Pre-



*Pretence of Fighting for Religion, were utterly Cancell'd.*

Truly so far I should like his Doctrine, especially if he could warrant men, that Intellectual or Religious Differences, should never come to Blowes: But Alas! Experience makes me more than doubt, 'tis but an Airy, or imaginary Notion: For, as I do not deny, but that those who endeavour an Establishment of Unity, and Uniformity in Faith, and Religion, may possibly occasion War; So those ( I fear ) of contrary Principles, can never long prevent it; But, I hope that G O D, who rules the unruly Ocean, will.

Thus far I do most willingly agree with him; That I would have none, who disturbe not the publick peace, & tranquillity of the Government, be persecuted upon a purely conscientious score: For, I think it a most uncharitable, and unreasonable method, (because impossible) to reduce mens Judgments, ( 'tis but one remove, from convincing them with Beetles, and Halters ), by taking away their Estates, and Starving their

their Bodies; But against those, who are found any way machinating against our true, and lawful Governours, (Especially the Supream), with all Severity and Rigour; *Curat Lex*. But yet, let every man smart, for his proper Fault; and not a whole Community, or Body of men, be made the very Buttocks of the Nation, to be kick'd, dash'd, and slander'd, for the Crimes of Particulars; For that certainly is as remote from Reason, Equity, and Justice, as it would be, To Pistol a man, because his Nose stands awry, or knock his Brains out, because he Squints; Or indeed, because the Serpent seduced *Eve*, and she *Adam*; whose Original Guilt corrupted, and deprav'd their whole Progeny. By the very same Crooked Rule, the Apostles themselves might be call'd Traytors, because *Judas* betray'd his Lord and Master.

Nor can, or shall I ever believe it, either Pious, or Politick, to use any other Force, but that of Arguments; for the Conviction, and Reduction of Disputers. One may as well try to tame

tame a Tyger, with Rational Arguments, as by Threats, or Violence; (for a man may be sooner frighted out of his Wits, than his Opinion); to conquer long - settled Judgments, and therefore, as the best Physick, to cure a *Quartane*, is, To be kind to it. So if Rational Discourse, & gentle Persuasions, cannot operate upon the intellect, & mind of man, through Applications (for what's Reason to one, may be Non-Sense to another) shall never work a free, or plenary assent, for those that are perforce Proselyted, may become Dissembling Hypocrites, but never Real-Converts. What Wise, or Worthy Spirits therefore would proceed so Irrationally, so Ignobly? or what advantagious Acquisition, or Glory can there be in such a Conquest? But this is a point, already most amply discuss'd, by much abler pens; [Reply to the Answer of the *Catholick Apology*, and Advocate of *Conscience-Liberty*]. To them therefore, I refer the Reader, and I return to the Author.

*Who maintains constantly, that*  
*sole*

sole Reason, in all Streights, and Exigences must Guide, and Steer us in our Course to our Haven, Heaven: For, says he, when I ask, Why you believe any Mystery of Faith, You will answer perhaps, Because the Present Church Commands you. If I proceed and ask, Why do you believe, what the Present Church Commands you? You will say, Because the Former Church Teaches the same: Why do you believe the Former Church? Because GOD Commands you so to do; Why do you believe, that God Commands it? Because you find it in the Scripture; Why do you believe the Scriptures to be the Word of GOD? Because they were confirm'd by Miracles; Why do Miracles confirm that? Because they are Workes which can proceed from nothing, but the Absolute, and Immediate Power, of the Deity: Why so? Because nothing contrary to, or above the Course of Nature can be done by Natural Agents.

And why should I, or any man else, say any thing against all this? Since he has so pertinently, and solidly answer'd,

sword all the Whys himself: but I  
 suppose he imagin'd, that, Syllogisti-  
 cally sounding the depth of the Ca-  
 tholick method, or rule of Faith with  
 this chain of Questions, and finding  
 Reason at the bottom of it (which me-  
 thinks should make him the sooner  
 embrace it) therefore he had invinci-  
 bly fortifi'd his own arguments for an  
 absolute and independent guidance of  
 private reason in all contingencies: but  
 alas, 'tis triumphing before the Victo-  
 ry, because as inconsequent, as if  
 one should say, my Rulers are no  
 more than rational men, and I being  
 a man of reason too, therefore my  
 obligation ceaseth to be rul'd by  
 them, neither ought any man in rea-  
 son to command, or obey others; but  
 is not this *cum ratiōe insanire*? A Do-  
 ctrine which (if prevalent) would in  
 a short time destroy not only Ecclesi-  
 astical, but all secular Oeconomy, and  
 Jurisdictions! and, in the end, leave  
 nothing but outward shape to di-  
 stinguish Men from Beasts, which  
 have no other Superiority, or Master-  
 ship amongst them but what they get

*V. & Arms*, with their Horns and Heels. Certainly, this is very prodigious (I had almost said monstrous) Reason; and so truly, I think, is the greatest part of his discourse, which in effect teaches, that, Divinity cannot stand unless Philosophy support it; nor St. Peter and St. Paul instruct, unless Aristotle and Plato comment; consequently no man can be a good Christian, that is not a good Philosopher; which, certainly is a very false and Anti-Christian assertion.

Authority and Obedience are Correlatives; there must be both or neither; and therefore his mysterious discourse of Obedience in Spirituality (which he calls *the most pleasing small in the Sacrifice*) I shall never understand, which totally invalidates all Ecclesiastical Regiment and Power.

St. Augustine (who, I presume, wanted not for Humane Reason) said peremptorily, *Ego verò Evangelium non crederem, nisi me Ecclesia Catholica commoveret Authoritas*. And to the same Authority (leaving the Scepticks to their Identities, Idities, and Quid-

Quiddities.) will I ever submit both my Understanding, & my Reason; for, would it not be very pleasant to hear a man Catechise or Preach to himself? and a pretty riddle for Master, Schollar, Preacher, and Auditour to be all in the same man? who, without some external conveyance, or outward aid can no more properly or safely indoctrinate himself, than he can possibly put his mouth to his own ear and whisper in it. Witty men (no doubt) may frame arguments against natural and experimental Demonstrations; as for example, Oral Loquution, or Local Motion: but certainly none (though few perhaps can solve every particular objection) will be perswaded, that we can neither speak nor move: The same I say as to the Church; when men are (as certainly they may be) indisputably satisfi'd that it is (and must necessarily be) infallible in its Conciliar-Definitions; whatsoever riseth in opposition, they consequently know (though perhaps not precisely How) must necessarily be inconclusive, fictitious,

and false, without descending to particular disputes, which is not only a toilsome but endless labour. For I have often thought, that since our Revolt from *Rome* there have been written *pro* and *con*-books enough (I should not exceed, if I said) to fill ten Vaticans, and yet we are in the same, or a worse condition; the reason is, because Corrolives are apply'd instead of Lenitives, Vinegar instead of Oyle; wherefore I compare Controversie to Physick, which as it cures many that would have dy'd, so it kills more that would have recover'd and liv'd without it.

Whether what I have hitherto said will have the good or ill fortune to be thought Reason, or not, I am not Prophet enough to know, nor concern'd enough to care, the principal motive being to employ some spare hours; but if it be esteem'd wholly insignificant (*Solamen miseris, &c.*) I am not the first by forty, who have written to no purpose; yet this I'll boldly say is to some, whatever arguments or engins of Wit are invented



ted and directed to undermine and subvert the Power and Authority of God's Church will but deceive, and at last recoil and ruine the Inventor ; And all these glittering words and gilded reasons (which I confess are drest in graceful language) this Author has rally'd together against it, can be at most but Verisimilities ; they may possibly delight some, amuze and puzzle others, but solidly and indubitably can inform none ; for I should take it very kindly from him, or any man else, that would tell me ( candidly ) what those imperative words (*Feed my Sheep, feed my Lambs*, spoken to *St. Peter*) signifie ? if not, that there should constantly be in God's Church ( which is essentially compos'd of *Docentes & discentes* ) Pastors, i. e. Instructors and Teachers, of others : For Christ our Lord (who never made, or said any thing in vain) did not speak plurally (as this Author interprets) *Feed ye my Sheep, feed ye my Lambs, even where your selves like best* ; but, *Pasce oves meas, &c. Feed thou my Sheep, Pe-*

ter, &c. But if all Men and Women (as this Author advises) should turn Sheepheards, and Sheepheardeſſes, (and ſo become Paſtors without Sheep, and Sheep without Paſtors, both and neither, or ſomething and nothing, ſtragglings and feeding upon various tabernack paſtures,) who ſhould, or could feed and keep the whole Flock in order? when there would be no ſuch thing as a Flock to be kept, if all Men, Women, and Children of all degrees and qualities were intended by our Bleſſed Saviour to feed (*i. e.*, to Inſtruct and Teach) themſelves; and therefore if the Authors doctrine (as to this particular) be reaſon, 'tis of that new ſort of reaſons, which for a while may taſt ſweetly and deliciously to licorish and licentious Palates, but in the end (*I* fear) they'll find 'twas but a bitter-ſweet, a pleaſant Poyſon.

In a word, if his diſcourſe (as it hath plauſibility) had weight enough to make any deep impreſſion in the minds of Men (though truly *I* do not think this was the Author's drift)

It would necessarily by degrees introduce Anarchy and Confusion: for it evidently invades and dismantles all Ecclesiastical Rule and Power; Annihilates the Pastoral Office, and makes all Clergy - Men totally Useless and Superfluous; and how can any Arguments (let them be never so Learnedly and Rhetorically adorned) have any real or intrinsecal goodness or solidity in them, which draw such mis-shapen, and ill-favour'd Consequences after them? *Per effectum Causa.*

Finally, I compare his Treatise to a painted Feast, (for *Non sunt omnia, quæ videntur*) which may whet and encrease mens Appetites, but can never satisfy their hunger; or rather to a Pile of Nettles and Roses, whereof a man cannot smell the sweet without stinging his Nose; for although it be intermixt with a great deal of Scholarship and Wit, and carries Reason in the Front, yet (according to my sentiment) 'tis so Enigmatically (if not Hypocritically) Vapt up, that, notwithstanding it be

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but

but a very small Volum. I cannot but think, There's a great deal too much of it; and lest the Reader (if it have any) should think so of mine, it shall not be long before I make an end.

Two passages upon a Review of his Treatise I thought convenient here to insert and speak to.

First: Where he says, *That ever since the beginning of the Christian Belief, there has been the Authority of above an hundred to one against it, and this Authority backt and strengthened with the Universal agreement of more than three thousand years before it.*

This hundred to one, and these three thousand years, makes a very great noise indeed, but to as little purpose. For, what rational man knows not, that not the greatness of the number (for so every Rebellion and Usurpation might be justifi'd) but the legality of the Power and Authority of men is that which justly exacts and requires (and to which we are

In duty oblig'd to pay J. our submission and obedience.

Secondly : Where he acknowledges that the best and truest Humane Reason could not have found out of it self that Mystery (by which, I suppose, he means the Incarnation) of Jesus Christ, but it was necessary first to be revealed, and as soon as the Spirit had revealed it (which it did by Miracles, &c.) even Humane Reason was also to behold, and to confess it : not that Grace had alter'd the eye-sight of Human-Reason, but drawn the object nearer to it ; and till the object was brought so nigh, the Wisdom of man did as safely not discern it, as it does not now the new state of things which shall be revealed at the second Coming.

And what news is there in all this ? or who-ever question'd the truth of it ? but yet if that not-discerning, or non-credence had been accompany'd with an obstinate resolution to disbelieve or reject every thing but what  
Rea-

Reason happen'd to find out by its own self-search (which would have been like a Man's denying to see a thing, though brought and set just before his eyes, because he did not first seek and spy it out himself); that *nescience* or non-discerning (I say) would not then have been safe, but highly culpable, because the things, which before men might have been innocently ignorant of, after sufficient and due proposal, become (at least *necessitate Præcepti*) *necessarie Credenda*.

More than this, I know nothing he has material to be answer'd to.

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*These ensuing Verses (which have long lain dormant) I thought not altogether improper to make the Epilogue of this little work.*

Upon his Majesty's Gracious Condescension, to a Toleration in —72. A year which I could wish had always lasted.

--- Regum est.  
*Parcere subjectis & debellare superbos.*

O Ur Royal Pilot (studying how to  
 (Steer,  
 And please each individual Passenger,  
 Embark'd with him) finds no Rocks  
 (nor Shelves  
 So formidable to us as our Selves.  
 For our intestine Fouds and discon-  
 (tent,  
 Endanger most the Ship of Govern-  
 (ment.

And what's the Source, from whence  
this mischief flows,

And in its progress so deformed grows?

But at the Tinder-boxes of our brains,  
Striking new lights, and for our fran-

Grouping in darkness, this (unhappy  
(Fate!)

Breeds a Confusion both in Church and  
(State.

But as the great King, with a Fiat

Light out of darkness, and his breath  
(convey'd

Form to the Chaos; so, by this Act of  
(Grace,

Ours, blows foul weather from the cloudy  
or mid'night) rolling in (face

Of his Great Britain, timely to pre-

Stave-plurifies, which no medicament  
Can cure, but letting Blood, and now

England a Free-State; and a Mo-

And may't unanimously be confess-

The Publick Good's our private Inte-  
(rest:



That, ~~first~~ Religion ~~alone~~ shall find to be  
The strongest Bond of our Fidelity.

But those that would (like Esops Dog)  
(have all,

Catching at shadows, let the substance  
(fall.

These Peccant humours our Physician  
(strives

T'assuage with soft and gentle Leni-  
(tives ;

In which Attempt, whether his Wisdom,  
(or

His Clemency exceeds, is dubious, for  
The Monster - multitude (like floods  
(confin'd)

By persecution grow the more combin'd,  
And forcing Vent, or Issues (like the  
(Sea

Rage but with more impetuosity.

But these Religious Struglings finding  
(scope,

By this Indulgence of our English Pope,  
Those rapid Zealots may (thus being  
(done)

Recurr, and in the proper Channel run.  
But if this fails, as in the Stars we see  
A Regular Irregularity;

So in our English Sphear (I hope) 'till  
 These various Sects may without clash-  
 And not Create their own Misfor-  
 In short, we may be happy if we will.

**FINIS.**

## ERRATA.

**P**Age 2. line 18. *opposed*, read *opposite*. p. 11. l. 22. *corporal*, r. *corporeal*. p. 33. l. 12 after *one*, r. *true*. p. 34 l. 2. *Canary, Claret, Syder, and Muscadine*, are, r. *Canary, Claret, and Syder Muscadine*. p. 39. l. 24. *in so*, r. *in se*. p. 51. l. 2. *by*, r. *to*. p. 51. l. 23. after *Prophecies*, add, *and*. p. 52. l. 10. *by*, r. *to*. p. 53. l. 7. after *stretch*, add, *it*. p. 55. l. 1. *his*, r. *the*. p. 55. l. 3. after *Election*, dele, *or choice*. p. 55. l. 24. after *Pitch*, add, *and*. p. 58. l. 28. *Disputers*, r. *Dissenters*.